



Meet **TRG**, your Textbook Reading Guide!

Follow his sneakers for hints and tips.

How to Read a Math Textbook

Instead of general tips, we are going to focus specifically on Chapter 4 in your textbook, **Elementary Algebra** by Bittinger and Ellenbogen.



Do I have a textbook?

You should have a textbook in hand or an online one.



Am I supposed to read the textbook? I thought that I just did MyMathLab!

You should read the textbook *before* going to MyMathLab. This way you will get an explanation of the concepts, just as Ms Williams would do, if she had you in a face to face class. So don't skip her.

In the textbook, you will learn the language of math and get the directions on how to do the problems. This will make my math lab easier to do.



Let's start with Chapter 4 on page 225 and see how hard this is going to be!

1. How many parts are there to Chapter 4?) (Never mind the number of pages.) Let's just look at the parts.
2. **8** parts. Wow! I hope we don't have to do this all in one week.
3. Let's check out the syllabus for this course and see if

everything has to be done at once or not.



Now where is that syllabus? Oh, I found it. It's in blackboard under course information. It's a Word document that you have to download, but once I have it I can print it out and put it in my textbook. The part I really need is called **Calendar of Activities**. Maybe I will just copy and paste that part into a new document and then I can post the calendar on my bulletin board, so I can see the due dates.

Here's what I found for Chapter 4. The good news is that we don't have to do the whole chapter at once. The bad news is that I was supposed to have started this Chapter on Feb. 9th and now I have a quiz coming upon Feb. 17th. I'd better get started!

Dates	Lessons	Quizzes
Feb. 9-15	4.1 - 4.3	Feb. 17
16 - 22	4.4 - 4.	Feb. 24
23 - March 1	4.8	Test Feb. 25 - 28

Calendar of Due Dates and Lessons

Ok. Now let's see what the first section 4.1-4.3 is all about.

- 4.1 Exponents and their Properties



Do I know what an exponent is? Maybe they'll tell me. Wait there's a secret part of this textbook that has the answers. It's called a **Glossary**. It's so secret that it's hidden in the back of the book. Bet you can't find it. It's right before the index pages at the back of the book.



Now here's the trick on learning the language of math.

Glossary

You're never going to have time to look up words each time you need them. So get an **index card** to use as a bookmark. Put your math word on it and a brief descriptor for yourself and maybe an example. Then use this throughout the chapter adding more math terms as you go along!

- 4.2 Polynomials - now there's another term
- 4.3 Addition and Subtraction of Polynomials

***Index Card or
Recipe Card***

At least, I know how to do addition and subtraction. I just have to learn what Polynomials are all about.



Now can I turn the page? I can't believe that that stuff was all on or pertaining to page 255.

'Now I'm going to peek at the back of the chapter. This is where they usually hide the answers. Page 294 has the study summary. This is all that I have to learn for this chapter and it doesn't look like too much. I should be able to handle it.

Better get my **index card** out, because the first page looks like all terms. They are reviewing terms that I already learned (and maybe forgot) in chapter 1, like monomial and binomial. But in the next box, I'd better write down



- degree of term
- coefficient
- descending and ascending order. I already know what this means in plain English: descending means to go down and ascending means to go up. But it looks like it might be a bit more complicated with polynomials. I will have to watch for that.
- Then it's just add, subtract, multiply and divide.

I can do that. Now let's start on 4.1 on page 226. Go back to Blackboard and choose Reading 4.1.

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Last Updated:02/14/09